

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COORDINATING COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of August 23, 2017

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Lourdes Cuzán	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	X	P	Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Israel Reyes	P	P	E	P	P		P	P	P	E	X	P	Comm. Frank Quesada
Alma Kadragic	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	X	P	Vice Mayor Patricia Keon
Claudio Pastor	E	P	P	P	E		P	P	P	E	X	E	Comm. Vince Lago
Volker Anding	P	P	E	P	P		P	E	P	P	X	P	Comm. Michael Mena
Enrique Monasterio	P	P	P	E	E		P	P	P	P	X	E	Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, City Manager
Rafael Gavarette	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	X	P	Council-at-Large Appointment

Country Appointed Liaisons:

Cartagena, Colombia – Ms. Cuzan
Aix-en-Provence, France – Mr. Anding
Antigua, Guatemala – Mr. Gavarrete

A = Absent

P = Present

E = Excused

UA = Unexcused Absence

Staff in Attendance:

Evelyn Paz, Secretary, IACC

Guest: Carolina Rendeiro, Resident

Ms. Cuzan called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Cuzan made a correction to the July 18, 2017 minutes. Ms. Cuzan nominated Mr. Anding to be Vice Chair. Mr. Monasterio seconded the motion.

Ms. Kadragic made a motion to approve the minutes of the IACC meeting on July 18, 2017 with the correction and Mr. Monasterio seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA:

Ms. Cuzan said the Mayor of Cartagena was arrested for trying to manipulate the election of the commission. There is a young man who has been appointed as interim by President Santos. The Interim Mayor is very receptive to maintaining the Coral Gables relationship. There is an ongoing project with their fire department and the City of Coral Gables fire department for the vehicular extrication training. The training is scheduled to take place in September. Ten firefighters from Cartagena will be traveling to Coral Gables. They will pay their own airfare and food. However, there is a housing issue. Coral Gables

is not expected to come up with accommodations. Ms. Cuzan has also had interest from Cartagena to have art exhibits in the Museum. Ms. Cuzan feels comfortable speaking to the contacts that are close to the interim mayor and feels comfortable with proceeding with the relationship.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding forwarded a message in regards to Mayor Valdés-Fauli meeting with him and Dr. Rosenbaum.

Mr. Anding informed that Mayor Valdes-Fauli had invited Dr. Rosenbaum (FIU) and Mr. Anding to a meeting in his office on August 11, 2017 at 3 p.m. in order to discuss some aspects of the sister city relationship between Coral Gables and Aix-en-Provence. Dr. Rosenbaum had recently visited Aix-en-Provence in the context of a lecture tour in France and had met with my counterpart in Aix-en-Provence.

Mr. Anding further stated that Mayor Valdes-Fauli had recently taken an initiative to create an "Innovation Council" with the goal to make the City of Coral Gables a smarter and more advanced community and the Innovation Center of the Americas. He wants to explore possibilities of cooperation with Aix-en-Provence and/or exchange ideas and prior experiences concerning an advanced online city administration. Aix-en-Provence counterpart whom I had contacted in this matter a few days ago reported back that this would be a very good and promising initiative. In order to get it started he suggested that the Mayor of Coral Gables write directly to the Mayor of Aix-en-Provence. He suggested also that with respect to earlier initiatives concerning a possible cooperation between the respective fire departments and police departments such a letter to the Mayor of Aix-en-Provence would also be the best way to get it started.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli plans to contact the Mayor of Aix-en-Provence as suggested Mr. Anding provided him with the current mailing address and with the e-mail address of the Mayor of Aix-en-Provence.

ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA:

Mr. Gavarrete said the chairman of the board of the Antigua hospital is planning a visit to Coral Gables and wishes to attend the IACC September meeting. The chairman will be presenting the history of the hospital. The hospital is old and they are moving the sickest patients to a new facility. The new hospital facility will be called Virgin de Socorro. The hospital requires equipment and supplies. The hospital has provided a list to Mr. Gavarrete. Mr. Gavarrete would like to donate and make the connections for the hospital to obtain the supplies. Mr. Gavarrete said they would need assistance in reaching out to the University of Miami for donations. Ms. Paz said they are pending approval of a letter from Mayor Valdés-Fauli to send to UM. Ms. Cuzan said she is looking forward to helping La Antigua to provide better medical service. Mr. Gavarrete said the presentation would be informal. They would probably provide brochures. Mr. Gavarrete provided the website for the hospital Mr. Monasterio asked if there was another hospital in La Antigua and if it was a non-profit hospital. Mr. Gavarrete said there is another hospital but this is the main hospital. The hospital is non-profit hospital. It has been sustained by donations from Guatemala. Ms. Cuzan said once the project has been presented and approved, they can begin to reach out to community hospitals.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Pastor said he had nothing to report from Italy. However, the Mayor will be meeting with the Consul General and one of the items will be Sister City relations. Mr. Pastor would remind the Consul General about the relationship. With regards to Granada, Mr. Pastor looked at his previous files and the contacts in Granada. He found a few people and contacts that are still there. Mr. Pastor said he will wait to contact them in early September and provide a report with his communications for the September 19th meeting. Ms. Cuzan said the Mayor feels that Granada has not been responsive to numerous efforts by the IACC to further develop the Sister Cities relationship and suggests the IACC should consider other Spanish cities to engage with. Mr. Pastor said if the Mayor feels something different then he will defer to the Mayor's judgment. The Mayor will be meeting with the Consul General of Spain to discuss other possible Sister City relationships within Spain.

Mr. Monasterio said when he travelled to Santander he met with the former mayor and the vice mayor who is currently the mayor for the next 3 years. Mr. Monasterio suggested reaching out to them again. Ms. Cuzan said feel free to reach out the Mayor Valdés-Fauli about Santander before his meeting with the Consul General.

Mr. Monasterio suggested cities in the former Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. These cities do not have any relationship with cities in the United States.

Ms. Kadragic met with a gentleman from Turkey that works for a large corporation in the country. They will be having lunch. Ms. Kadragic will also be reaching out the Consul General of Turkey to discuss a potential Sister City relationship. Ms. Kadragic said that cities that have gone through disasters and terrorist attacks might be interested in relations with our City to gain insight on how to protect them better. Mr. Reyes offered his contacts to help cultivate relationships. He said there are a lot of local assets that can be contacted.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Ms. Rendeiro gave an update on the sister city relationship with Portugal. There will be a delegation coming of 28 coming from different Portuguese corporations on October 11. Ms. Rendeiro is hoping the Mayor of Aveiro will be part of the delegation but they will not know for sure until later in the week. The Ambassador of Portugal is expected to be part of the delegation. Ms. Cuzan asked if there will be any events planned for the delegation. Ms. Rendeiro said she had spoken to Mayor Valdés-Fauli about hosting a reception. Ms. Rendeiro is working with their schedule to finalize an event. Mr. Reyes asked if the honorary consulate was still in Coral Gables. Ms. Rendeiro said there is an honorary counsel but she is usually the contact person. Ms. Rendeiro says the companies that will be part of the delegation are technology based and wine exports. Ms. Cuzan asked what the status of the relationship with Aveiro. Ms. Rendeiro said if the mayor of Aveiro comes with the delegation they could finalize the relationship by both mayors signing the agreement. Aveiro's only sister city will be with Coral Gables and North New Jersey.

Ms. Cuzan said Mayor Valdés-Fauli received a letter from the mayor of Meta, Colombia. They are interesting in a Friendship relationship with the City of Coral Gables. The governor herself wrote the letter. The letter talks about Meta. Meta is the equivalent of a state in the United States. Ms. Cuzan provided information regarding the city. They are very much of an agricultural city. The capital city of Meta is Villavicencio which is known for tourism and art. The Mayor feels this should be a good effort because it could lead to a more formal relationship. The purpose of a friendship city is to see the relationship and how it progresses. Ms. Cuzan suggested as a backup to Cartagena this might be a promising relationship. Mr. Monasterio suggested clarifying if the relationship would be with the Meta or with Villavicencio. Ms. Cuzan said she would clarify that and she would report back at the next meeting. Ms. Rendeiro said in Colombia there is only 11 Sister Cities with the United States.

The Mayor also received interest from two cities in Argentina. The cities are Cordoba and San Isidro. The Mayor of San Isidro is coming in October and is advocating strongly for a relationship. San Isidro is to Buenos Aires what Coral Gables is to Miami. Ms. Cuzan said they will be waiting until October for the two mayors to meet and discuss the potential relationship. Mr. Monasterio suggested they should look into the possibility of a relationship with San Isidro for next meeting. Ms. Cuzan said they could wait until the mayors meet or they could go ahead and have the mayors sign the agreement in October when they meet. Mr. Monasterio said if they look into the relationship prior to the September meeting they can present the Mayor with the information on whether it would be a good match or not. Ms. Cuzan agreed. Ms. Rendeiro thought San Isidro would be a great city. It would be very compatible with Coral Gables. They have become a technology tech hub. It is a mix of Coral Gables and Wynwood. Ms. Rendeiro said Cordoba is a big city compared to Coral Gables.

The Mayor received a letter regarding a famous sculpture in Florence and in Aix. The sculpture is named “El Porcelino”. There is a resident in Miami who bought the original sculpture. The resident died. The sculpture was in his formal home. The new homeowner would like to donate/sell the sculpture to the City. The Mayor forwarded the information to Dona Spain. This project is preliminary. The cultural department needs to find a suitable place that attracts pedestrian traffic. This project has the potential to bring together the French and Italian community. More information will be provided at the next meeting.

Ms. Cuzan asked Ms. Rendeiro if there was a form through Sister Cities International that potential Sister Cities needed to fill out in order to find relationships with other cities. Ms. Rendeiro said on the website there is a section where you can find sister cities seeking sister cities. There will be a list of the cities searching for Sister Cities. The form includes population, GDP, etc. The approval comes between the cities.

Ms. Rendeiro is now the state representative for Sister Cities in Florida. There are 218 Sister Cities in the state for Florida; however, only about 41 are active. Ms. Rendeiro is in charge of visiting each city to cultivate their relationship with the state. Ms. Rendeiro said there is a lot of cities seeking sister city relationships. Sister Cities International is having a tough time with cities in Europe because they only want relationships within their continent. The relationships that the City does have with Europe they need to cultivate the relationships.

Sister Cities International is going through a change in leadership that could ask a social media component.

There is a grant opportunity through Sister Cities International that will be open soon. The grant could serve for educational purposes. Ms. Rendeiro said it is a simple process and favors nonprofits. The City could apply with it through the Foundation.

Ms. Rendeiro said if there is a need for funds through the Foundation, the IACC Board should feel free out to her or Mr. Edelstein for projects.

In regards to Mr. Monasterio's recommendation about a city in Eastern Europe, Ms. Rendeiro said Slovenia is super strong and are open to relationships. Ms. Rendeiro said the Caribbean and Eastern Europe is looking for sister city relationships. The city Ticis is looking to cultivate a relationship.

The Sister Cities International Co-Chair is Mrs. Pence. She is very involved and would be happy to participate in events.

Announcement:

The next meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2017.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Paz
Secretary, International Affairs Coordinating Council